

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF CENTRAL REFERENCE

15 AUG 1960

REQUIREMENTS FOR FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS: THE COMMITTEE
ON PROCUREMENT OF FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS (PROCIB)

I. INTRODUCTION:

Previous papers have dealt with broad aspects of requirements. In this paper we wish to stress one very important type of requirement: foreign publications. Practically every writer with knowledge of the intelligence process has pointed out that 80-90% of the information used in the production of intelligence is available from open and overtly procurable publications. From this statement one should not, however, infer that, in fact, 80-90% of intelligence is produced from such publications. The unfortunate situation is that many people (and in high places) somehow associate the classification of a document with the validity or usefulness of the information contained in that document. The point remains without successful challenge though, that 80-90% of intelligence could be produced from the information contained in overtly procured publications. It is the coordination of the program for this overt procurement of publications that is the concern of the Committee on Procurement of Foreign Publications (PROCIB).

II. BACKGROUND:

In the early days of CIA there was a spasm of thinking, fortunately brief, which went something like this. Establish a reference center which would deal with English-language books. Establish an operation which would translate all foreign language publications needed by analysts who were experts in their respective subject fields. Ergo, you do not need foreign language capability either in your reference center or among your analysts. You do need translators, who in turn require books, magazines and newspapers from everywhere.

As the Agency became more sophisticated, the blending of the ideas mentioned took place. The reference center became a real library - needing foreign publications because the analysts using it were either trained or recruited for their foreign language and subject competence. The linguists on the other hand, were receiving more intelligent requirements and soon learned that they were an integral part of the intelligence production structure. There were actually known cases where analysts and linguists were prepared to acknowledge each other's competence.

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- 2 -

III. DISCUSSION:

How do requirements for foreign publications develop? In CIA we start with the Library, which must be in a position to satisfy any requester's particular needs. The research needs of ORR require a collection strong in economics; of OSI, in science and technology; of OCI, everything substantial on communism, foreign areas, etc. and all current. Library personnel are constantly studying office requirements, either by scanning announced research programs, or by the expanding personal contacts they have developed throughout the Agency. We are always trying to anticipate the broad needs of our research associates. This function, which involves the development of our Library collections, would, if not contained properly, result in a library almost equal to the magnificent collections of the Library of Congress. But to maintain a proper delimitation, we rely on all major library collections in the United States to backstop us. Our book collections in the Library in our new building will not exceed 200-225,000 volumes. A vigorous weeding process makes this containment effective. In addition to the Library's needs, we in OCR are also the mechanism through which all specific publications required by all of CIA are procured. For example, an analyst sees a reference to an American book that he believes will be of use to him. He orders it. A comparatively simple operation. But suppose he wants to subscribe to a foreign, communist newspaper. A more complicated problem, but it can be and is being done.

So much for the Agency's requirements. CIA, however, by its very charter, has a coordinating responsibility. We faced this problem head on in 1953 when the National Security Council (NSCID-16) established the Advisory Committee on Foreign Language Publications to assist the DCI in the coordination of the publications program. Representatives of the IAC (now USIB) were appointed to the Committee, which had three Subcommittees: Procurement, Exploitation and Reference. I was Chairman of this Committee from 1954 to its dissolution in 1958 and have been Chairman of the successor committee, PROCIB, since 1958.

Recognizing that the publication collection mechanism needed support, the Committee noted the assumption by CIA of the functions of the Foreign Publications Branch, Department of State in 1953. The Acquisitions Branch of the CIA Library administers these functions which include the coordination of the requirements of 20 other U.S. agencies; it levies requirements upon appropriate Foreign Service officers in the field, and receives and disseminates the material sent back to Washington. It is interesting to note that one of the earliest problems discussed by the Advisory Committee was the need for coordination in the field between Foreign Service Publications Procurement Officers and the Service Attaches. This remains a problem today because of a reluctance on the part of the Military Services to cooperate except in selected cases.

Among the major achievements of Committee action in the area of requirements were:

S-E-C-R-E-T

- 3 -

a. Revised Chapter 943 of the Foreign Service Manual, dealing with Publications Procurement.

b. Prepared and issued, for example, two collection guides (Chinese Communist newspapers and periodicals) to field collectors of the three Services, State and CIA. Field collection facilities of the Army and the Air Force in Japan were particularly helpful. Also issued other specialized want lists or similar compilations of requirements.

c. Recommended to the State Department that Publications Procurement Officer positions be established at Tokyo and Djakarta, and re-established in Cairo and London. Cairo and London were reactivated in Fiscal Year 1957. The position at Tokyo, that of Geographic Attache, has been utilized half-time as Publications Procurement Officer since 1953. Djakarta has not been manned.

d. Persuaded USIA to allow us to use its overseas resources to obtain information on the availability of foreign publications. The information in turn was of value in the preparation of collection instructions in certain areas.

e. Made field trips to improve coordination of collection and to clarify requirements.

f. Received IAC concurrence for a letter from the DCI to be sent to the Secretary of State stressing the importance of the publications procurement program to the intelligence community and recommending augmentation in certain areas.

g. Stimulated evaluations to the field incorporating specific examples of the contributions overt publications have made to intelligence.

25X1X4 Provided personnel engaged in interrogation work (particularly [redacted] with adequate requirements for information on foreign publications.

i. Recommended a draft DCID 2/5, Procurement of Foreign Publications, to the IAC, which recognized that the procurement program had grown to the extent that a separate Committee was needed to coordinate it.

DCID 2/5 established the Committee on Procurement of Foreign Publications (PROCIAC) of the IAC. Later in 1958, USIB was established and the IAC committee structure was approved for USIB. PROCIAC became PROCIB.

In addition to the continuing programs mentioned above, the following are noteworthy achievements by PROCIB in the area of requirements:

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

- 4 -

a. The three national libraries of the U.S., Library of Congress, National Library of Medicine, and the Department of Agriculture Library, as well as the National Science Foundation and USIA were invited to participate in PROCIB discussions. By bringing selected, important collection facilities into the intelligence picture through participation of the national libraries in PROCIB discussions, the importance of all foreign publications programs to intelligence was stressed. We have maintained continuing liaison with the academic world through the mechanism of the Association of Research Libraries, a group of the 50 leading university and other research libraries in the U.S. Sanitized versions of field survey reports have been made available to them, as well as literally tons of foreign publications through the device of the Library of Congress duplicate exchange collections. Our aim is to know what is being collected, where and for whom, because we believe publications to be a vital resource to intelligence, no matter whether the materials be in our library, another government library, or in a university library.

b. To stress the importance of close contact between the field collector and Washington, Publications Procurement Officer Conferences were held in 1958 and 1960. Both conferences were attended by a majority of full-time Foreign Service Publications Procurement Officers as well as representatives from the Air Force, Army Map Service, CIA and State.

c. The Procurement Committee works closely with the Committee on Exploitation of Foreign Language Publications to arrange extraordinary procurement of materials of high priority. In response to a list of 51 critical Far Eastern publications received from the Exploitation Committee, PROCIB utilized all sources available to it, succeeded in procuring or eliminating all but one of the items and submitted a requirement for that one title to the Intelligence Priorities Committee for collection.

d. In the absence of any coordinating mechanism, PROCIB realized that graphics materials were in fact a special case of publications procurement. It therefore assumed coordination and procurement responsibilities in this area.

e. A bibliography of requirements activities carried out by PROCIB and its predecessor committees is appended.

IV. AREAS OF CONTINUING CONCERN:

State Department field collection facilities for foreign publications are available to the intelligence community to a considerably greater degree

S-E-C-R-E-T

S-E-C-R-E-T

- 5 -

than those of the military services. Requirements for overtly available publications are seldom coordinated with other procurement channels by the Military Services.

A single fund has been established in Moscow for the procurement of publications by the Officer there on behalf of eleven U.S. agencies, again excluding the services. If this program meets with success at this major post, the experience derived will be studied for application at other posts such as Paris, Berlin, Cairo or London.

The State Department has executive responsibility (Executive Order 10249 of 1951) for the publications procurement program, including the allocation of personnel, although CIA requirements account for more than 75% of the total amount of money spent in the field. We in CIA believe that better qualified personnel should be selected by State to fill the full-time publication procurement officer posts. Another facet of the problem is the extremely low priority given publications procurement in the field. It is considered to be no asset to a Foreign Service Officer's career to be a publication procurement officer. On the other hand, certain highly-qualified and well-motivated officers who are prepared to make publications procurement a career are prevented from doing so by the regulations of the Foreign Service - a paradox indeed.

All assets in the community should be mobilized to ensure the procurement of Soviet hard-to-get titles, and Chinese Communist scientific and technical publications.

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